

California State University, San Bernardino

CSUSB ScholarWorks

Theses Digitization Project

John M. Pfau Library

1998

A special education composition curriculum: An interactive approach

Jeffrey Michael Neighbors

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project>



Part of the [Special Education and Teaching Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Neighbors, Jeffrey Michael, "A special education composition curriculum: An interactive approach" (1998). *Theses Digitization Project*. 1770.

<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project/1770>

This Project is brought to you for free and open access by the John M. Pfau Library at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses Digitization Project by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.

A SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPOSITION CURRICULUM:
AN INTERACTIVE APPROACH

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education:
Middle Grades Option

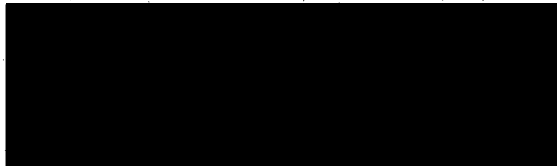
by
Jeffrey Michael Neighbors
September 1998

A SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPOSITION CURRICULUM:
AN INTERACTIVE APPROACH

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

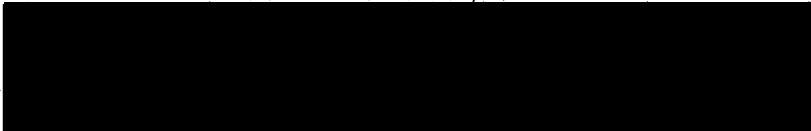
by
Jeffrey Michael Neighbors
September 1998

Approved by:



Irvin Howard, First Reader

8/8/98
Date



Ellen Kronowitz, Second Reader

ABSTRACT

Writing instruction that reflects the variety of represented pupil intelligences and learning styles in a special day classroom can significantly increase a child's opportunity for success. Attending to these areas while simultaneously taking into account student strengths, interests, and desires can facilitate the academic process. Written language skills and achievement must be addressed in a supportive and encouraging climate motivating children and maximizing their willingness to undertake new concepts. Implementing writing lessons that acknowledge student's senses and intelligences provides adolescents with learning that continues long after the lesson is completed. Howard Gardner and other researchers have applied stimulating research in the classroom with exemplary success. A basic writing curriculum reflecting these ideas is presented here.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my mom and dad for their consistent guidance and support instilling in me the desire to learn.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iv
CHAPTER 1: FRONT MATTER.....	1
General Introductory Remarks.....	1
Significance of the Project.....	3
Statement of Needs.....	4
Program Plan.....	5
Limitations and Delimitations.....	6
Assumptions.....	8
Definitions of Terms.....	9
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	11
CHAPTER 3: BASIC COMPOSITION CURRICULUM.....	24
Project: Puppet Making/Dialogue.....	24
Project: "ME" Collage/Paragraph.....	25
Project: Life Rules List/Simple and Compound Sentences.....	28
Project: Mission Viejo and Around Brochure/ Paragraphs.....	29
Project: Pumpkin Patch Painting/Essay.....	31
Project: Pumpkin Carving/Exposition - Process.....	33
Project: Thoreau/Simple Sentences.....	34
Project: Paper Mache Mask/Story.....	36
Project: Art Expression - Impressionism/ Journaling - News Story.....	37
Project: Art Expression - Seurat/Journaling.....	39
Project: Art Expression - Van Gogh/Journaling.....	41

Project: Art Expression - Paul Cezanne/Journaling...	43
Project: Musical Observation/Word Phrases Into Sentences.....	44
Project: "I Have A Dream"/Essay.....	46
Project: Blowing Bubbles/Essay.....	47
Project: "If I Were An Animal"/Exposition - Comparison.....	49
Project: Pizza/Essay - Description.....	51
Project: Potato Print Paper/Exposition - Process....	52
Project: Totem Pole/Research Paper.....	54
Project: Spring Observation/Paragraph Development...	55
Project: Internet Report/Research Paper.....	57
Project: Old Black Fly/A Book.....	58
CHAPTER 4: BACK MATTER.....	61
Conclusion.....	61
Program Evaluation.....	61
APPENDIX A: Additional Information.....	63
REFERENCES	66

CHAPTER 1: FRONT MATTER

General Introductory Remarks

Special day class students at Newhart Middle School in Mission Viejo, California rely on knowledgeable teachers to carefully present educational experiences within the learning environment providing ample opportunity for academic growth. Instruction which reflects the variety of student represented intelligences and learning styles significantly increases a child's chance for success. Attending to these areas while simultaneously taking into account student strengths, interests, and desires facilitates the academic process (Armstrong, 1995). Written language skills and achievement must be addressed in a supportive and encouraging climate motivating children and maximizing pupil willingness to undertake new concepts. Implementing writing lessons that acknowledge students' perceptions and intelligences provides adolescents with effective learning that continues beyond the completed lesson (Smagorinski, 1996). The research of Howard Gardner and others has beneficially influenced that which occurs in classrooms today.

The vast majority of special education students arrive to the special day classrooms at Newhart Middle School with discrepancies of many grade levels between their ability and their achievement in the areas of math, reading, and written language. Most experience difficulty with the acquisition of language resulting in their inability to adequately process

information in traditional ways. Most of these individuals are unable to perform at levels necessary for daily participation in the regular middle school classroom. Many have lost the initiative or incentive to apply their strengths expressing remarks of apathy or boredom. Many possess low opinions of themselves, disinterest in their education, poor social skills, and general feelings that educational expectations are too great.

Teachers, likewise, may feel overwhelmed and unprepared by the the increasing diversity of achievement and ability levels of students they are expected to instruct. In addition, class sizes are increasing, effective classroom support is difficult to obtain, and parent expectations continue to intensify.

Capistrano Unified School District, whom is responsible for instructing these students, has provided special education teachers throughout the district with a carefully designed curriculum continua. This specialized continua parallels the regular middle school curriculum and establishes criteria for special education instruction. The classroom teacher must thoughtfully design specific instructional techniques and methods to address the unique educational requirements of each special education student.

A series of writing lessons that coincide with the composition portion of the language arts continua would provide special day classroom teachers with an excellent resource with which to guide their academic efforts in the classroom while instructing special day students.

Significance of the Project

Special education classrooms are changing throughout the district in that they include a very heterogeneous group of students encompassing several types of handicapping conditions. This reflects the positive trend in education to provide students with schooling that occurs in their neighborhood school. Presently, a single classroom may include students with Down Syndrome, Attention Deficit Disorder, Limited Intellectual Functioning, Specific Learning Disabilities, Speech and Language issues, vision and hearing concerns, physical disabilities and/or a variety of health and medical issues. This diversity presents educators with seemingly insurmountable obstacles and challenges.

Instructional techniques that recognize this growing classroom diversity while simultaneously considering these differences advantageously when instructing writing are necessary (Gardner, 1993). Utilizing a multisensory hands-on approach and Gardner's multiple intelligences research in the classroom addresses this, in addition to, providing students and teachers with materials that provoke enthusiasm, interest, and academic growth. Students are presented ample opportunities to utilize their strengths, interests, and desires while directing efforts to improve their written language skills. Teachers are rewarded with the satisfaction of providing effective instruction while creating further momentum for success.

Statement of Needs

Special education students enrolled in special day classrooms at Newhart Middle School depend on the knowledge and skills of their teachers to provide individualized instruction in written language in order to improve achievement levels. Students involved in these classrooms possess achievement levels one or more grade levels below their current grade as determined by regular standardized testing. These students must become familiarized and skilled with the writing process to improve opportunities to be successful within the regular classroom and throughout their lives.

Teachers of special education students are provided with a special education writing curriculum continua that parallels CORE (Capistrano Objectives for Reaching Excellence) objectives used within the regular middle school classroom. This guide lists writing skills sequentially enabling special education teachers to create lessons addressing the individual goals and objectives determined by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team. The formulation of a written language curriculum is paramount as no available curriculum exists within the special education department. A curriculum beneficial to every special education teacher would be difficult to devise due to the dynamic character of the students involved in the special education program in the Capistrano Unified School District though a writing program geared toward the learning handicapped population would be

possible.

Writing lessons and assignments must provide students and teachers with useful information creating a productive, yet enjoyable learning environment. This curriculum must address the vast variety of student achievement levels, create interest and motivation, provide relevancy, and include regular practice and application of learned skills. It must also enable teachers to confidently implement proven learning techniques, creatively engage students, and address the diversity of student interests, intelligences, and learning styles within the special day classroom.

Program Plan

The primary goal of this writing curriculum is to provide special day class students with ample opportunities to improve their basic composition skills and achievement. Students, through active involvement in the entire writing process, from gathering information to editing and rewriting, will strengthen their inherent talents, intelligences and skills while improving their technique and confidence in written language. Students will profit from their participation in this writing curriculum.

This program provides special day class teachers with an effective curriculum which engages students interactively in the writing process. Teachers will appreciate the ease with which these lessons can be implemented. Success will be

measured in terms of achieved IEP goals, greater enthusiasm, and increased confidence. In addition, a more positive learning environment will reflect the interest and confidence of students as writing lessons are displayed before the class with related projects involving art, drama, music, and nature.

Implementation of this curriculum will largely be dependent on the handicapping condition of the students, IEP goals, and general environment of the special day classroom. It has been my experience that conducting writing lessons in the special day classroom usually takes much longer than one might expect due to the nature of the students and the level of competency a teacher would like to achieve for the class as a whole. I personally prefer students acquire a greater knowledge of the writing process than might be specified in the Individual Education Plan. Thus, it is nearly impossible to determine a calendar for implementation that would apply regularly.

Learning objectives are included in each lesson within the curriculum enabling teachers to target individual composition skills. Behaviorally written goals and objectives are contained in the IEP of each special education student.

Limitations and Delimitations

I propose to create a twenty lesson written language curriculum that parallels the Capistrano Unified School

District's Special Education continuum for basic composition. Lessons will be multisensory in nature and influenced by the multiple intelligences research of Howard Gardner. Each lesson will allow students at variable achievement levels to participate. This program will focus on basic composition skills, that is, deficit areas in which students continue to experience difficulties as they proceed through middle school.

Limitations - This curriculum has been designed for implementation in learning handicapped special day classrooms at Newhart Middle School. The emphasis is on providing special education teachers with a multisensory approach to instruct students in the process of writing, including pre-writing, writing, and post-writing. Students, through active participation in exercises influenced by Gardner's multiple intelligences and learning style research, will begin to view writing as beneficial yet enjoyable. It is not the intention of this project to identify the intelligences of individual students. Likewise, it is not the intention to identify individual learning styles. The learning styles emphasized in this curriculum are visual, auditory, and kinesthetic, although the kinesthetic style is of primary focus. This curriculum serves as guide for the teacher instructing special needs students as a group. Due to the variations in achievement and skills it is not the intention of the program to focus on vocabulary development, style, or practical writing skills. Also skills requiring advanced cognitive levels such as those introduced for the first time in seventh

and eighth grade are not included in this instructional guide. It is hoped that teachers will use this information as a catalyst from which to create additional lessons of their own.

Delimitations - A complete and thorough written language program based on the Capistrano U.S.D. Special Education continuum including instruction in grammar, usage, and mechanics was initially considered. As a result of my teaching experience with the learning handicapped population a limited program would be more beneficial as the majority of learning handicapped students I instruct require extensive attention to creating sentences and simple compositions while building confidence and a willingness to write. This curriculum incorporates basic pre-writing skills through multi-paragraph development. A project of greater depth would be difficult to create and implement in a timely fashion.

Assumptions

The following assumptions apply for this project:

- (1) The number of students in the language arts classroom will not exceed 12 during any given class period.
- (2) Disciplinary behaviors will not interfere with the learning and/or instruction within the classroom.
- (3) Adequate instructional assistance will be supplied to the special day classroom to sufficiently meet the special needs of the student population.

- (4) Learning handicapped students as determined by Capistrano U.S.D. will participate in this program.
- (5) Funds will be available to purchase necessary supplies.
- (6) Students are capable of receptive and expressive oral language.

Definitions of Terms

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) - "a neurologically based disorder, most probably of genetic origin..." which includes components of hyperactivity, impulsivity, and inattention.
(Armstrong, 1995, p.4-5)

Down Syndrome - A congenital disorder, caused by the presence of an extra 21st chromosome, in which the affected person has mild to moderate mental retardation, short stature, and a flattened facial profile (The American Heritage Dictionary).

handicapping condition - determines eligibility for special education services; categories include: hearing impairment; deaf blind; language or speech disorder; visual impairment; severe orthopedic impairment; chronic or acute health problems; autistic-like behavior; limited intellectual functioning; serious emotional disturbance; and specific learning disability.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) - a written statement for a handicapped child, describing the educational objectives for that child and the special services to be provided.

intellectual ability (state criteria) - includes both

acquired learning and learning potential, and shall be determined by a systematic assessment of intellectual functioning.

IEP Team - must include principal or vice principal, teacher, and parent/guardian of student involved; other specialists may be involved.

language disorder (state criteria) - includes disorders in language development in the areas of morphology, syntax, semantics or pragmatics.

level of achievement (state criteria) - includes level of competence in materials and subject matter explicitly taught in school, and shall be measured by standardized achievement tests.

limited intellectual functioning (state criteria) - includes significantly below average general functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, which adversely affect educational performance. (CCR Title 5 3030h)

special day class - classroom in which a special education student participates 51% or more of each school day.

specific learning disability (state criteria) - a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which manifests itself in an impaired ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations, and includes a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement in one or more of the academic areas specified in Section 56337(a) of the Education Code.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature reviewed strongly illustrated that students bring a variety of different intelligences and learning styles to the classroom and that effective instruction design must consider these components. Ozman and Craver in *Philosophical Foundations of Education* (1995) stated that proponents of the pragmatism philosophy believe that students arrive daily to the classroom with many attributes including socialness, psychological considerations, and intellectual capabilities. In addition, each student embodies personal styles of learning, collections of background experiences, and unique interests and needs for learning. These considerations are critical when designing an effective educational program. Pragmatists feel that utilization of this information permits teachers to create learning experiences that are individualized, relevant and motivating. Moreover, a thorough understanding of the learner empowers lesson designers to establish efficient instructional techniques that encourage children to interact with their learning environment, investigating and determining consequences for themselves. Finally, a competent understanding of these components results in a learning environment that supplies support, empathy, and encouragement allowing thoughtful direction and monitoring of student growth and learning (Ozman and Craver, 1995).

Karen Rooney in "Dyslexia Revisited" (1995) addressed student differences as she discussed Dr. Samuel Torrey Orton's

ten year study concerning language acquisition disorders in children. Dr. Orton was a professor of neurology and neuropathology at Columbia University when his comprehensive brain research determined that "...brains are structurally different" (p.1). The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities in 1994 embraced this stimulating research when they stated "learning disabilities are significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities" (p.1). These difficulties result in academic and emotional problems in children resulting in the need for specially designed instructional techniques to meet the unique educational requirements of students possessing similar disabilities. These techniques include highly structured multisensory methods to instruct and remediate reading, writing, and speech.(Rooney, 1995)

Thomas Armstrong, in his book, *The Myth of the A.D.D. Child* (1995), shared that students learn in different ways and, as a result, a variety of instructional methods should be included in the classroom. Many students benefit from participation in hands on activities as opposed to more traditional methods involving lecturing, questioning, and responding. Haptic learners (from the Greek word haptos, meaning "laying hold of"), as identified by art educator, Vikto Lowenfeld, "need to have direct physical contact with something in order to learn more about it" (p.165). This type of student familiarizes them self with their environment through the sense of touch. Robert McKim, a former Stanford

creativity professor, according to Armstrong, expressed that many individuals who utilize a hands on approach are highly valued in society, for example, designers, scientists, engineers, and artists. Some students, for example, hyperactive students "...may be expected to do better in learning environments that involve students creating projects or going on field trips--settings where multiple sources of information are internalized and processed" (p.33). In addition, "students need to be questioning, hypothesizing, experimenting, interviewing, collaborating, problem-solving, and more" (p.54). Armstrong's understanding of student learning styles was greatly enriched when he became familiar with the multiple intelligences research of Howard Gardner.

Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences has continued to influence the field of education since his fascinating research was revealed in his 1983, *Frames of Mind*. He disagrees with the long held view that intelligence is based on one's ability to correctly respond to logical and linguistic problems. Instead, Gardner proposed seven intelligences in *Frames of Mind*, though, has added two more recently (Gardner, 1998).

The nine intelligences include:

1. Musical Intelligence
2. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence
3. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence
4. Linguistic Intelligence
5. Spatial Intelligence
6. Interpersonal Intelligence

7. Intrapersonal Intelligence
8. Naturalist Intelligence
9. Existential Intelligence

Musical Intelligence refers to the ability to comprehend music theory, concepts, and patterns. Those strong in this realm are able to recognize, understand, enjoy, manipulate and process music, think musically, and thoroughly understand and apply musical patterns. An inherent desire for music exists, often, prior to becoming involved with the topic. Individual examples: Bach, Louie Armstrong, Elvis Presley, musician, lyricist.

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence involves using one's entire body or parts of one's body to participate in activities, such as sports or dramatic pursuits, complete projects, or express one's emotions physically. Individuals possessing this intelligence are able to mentally determine movements, distances, and other dimensions necessary for competent involvement in their chosen activity. Individual examples: Michael Jordan, Babe Ruth, Michelle Kwan, athlete, actor, artist.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence includes the ability to think in mathematical terms, understand and manipulate numbers, and process quantities and operations. Mathematical reasoning occurs quickly and naturally in people gifted in this area. Individual examples: Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawkins, Isaac Newton, mathematician, engineer, scientist.

Linguistic Intelligence refers to the ability to

express, process, recall, and understand language; this intelligence is universal. It includes spoken and written language. Individual examples: Maya Angelou, John Steinbeck, Toni Morrison, poet, orator.

Spatial Intelligence allows individuals to clearly understand the spatial domain within one's consciousness; Gardner shares examples of pilots and navigators effortlessly plotting their course. Recognition of places, people, and things occurs naturally. Individual examples: Charles Lindbergh, Magellan, Christopher Columbus, explorer, pilot, navigator.

Interpersonal Intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand and interact successfully with people. Those capable of this intelligence are adept at determining changes in an individual's attitude, mood and temperament. Individual examples: Martin Luther King, Jr., Barbara Walters, psychologist, counselor, teacher.

Intrapersonal Intelligence includes the capacity to thoroughly and productively reflect on one's life; individuals skilled in this intelligence have thoughtfully pondered their past, present, and future. Individual examples: Plato, Mother Theresa, Anis Nin, philosopher, psychiatrist.

Naturalist Intelligence enables people to observe and recognize one's environment; environment refers to that of naturally occurring items, such as forests and clouds and man-made things, such as cities and cars. Individual examples: Ansel Adams, Frank Lloyd Wright, conservationist,

biologist.

Existential Intelligence refers to the ability to think about issues, such as life, existence, and death. Individual examples: Billy Graham, Jesse Jackson, philosopher, clergy.

Gardner developed his multiple intelligences theory by reviewing information regarding human development, cognition, and psychological processes. His in depth research also took into account cultures, normal and gifted individuals, and exceptional populations, such as autistic children, prodigies, and idiots savants (Gardner, 1993). Student populations in special day classrooms are similar to those included in Gardner's research; as a result, Gardner's theory has beneficial implications in the special day classroom.

Howard Gardner, in "An intelligent way to progress" (1998), discussed that difficult concepts may become easier to grasp when presented to a student in an understandable way. Utilizing drama, charts, and stories have assisted youngsters to understand difficult ideas and to understand these ideas with significantly better comprehension. Gardner added, that this is a result of students utilizing a number of intelligences to learn a concept or idea. This process is similar to that used by an expert who can think about things in a variety of ways.

Howard Gardner did not originally have the field of education in mind when he began studying multiple intelligences but educators around the world have embraced his findings providing effective and inspirational learning

programs for students world wide. Peter Smagorinski has involved students in nontraditional methods in the classroom, that is, methods which do not necessarily include writing, prior to Gardner's *Frames of Mind*. Gardner's research confirmed Smagorinski's intuitions to the benefits of including nontraditional "compositions," (as Smagorinski refers to them) in the classroom. Smagorinski recognized that students, when engaged in nontraditional activities, became energized and appeared to be truly enthused about demonstrating their understanding of studied concepts. In "Multiple Intelligences in the English Class: An Overview" (1995), Smagorinski touted the inclusion of multiple intelligences activities in the classroom. He shared observations of unmotivated students who fail to complete nightly homework or apply themselves in the classroom "become some of the most enthusiastic and productive kids" as a result of being able to express their understanding of literature utilizing a non written format. He cited a classroom study he conducted with John Coppoch in 1994 in which students were involved in "non-written literary interpretations," involving dance, art, and song (Smagorinski, 1995). Interviews conducted with students following completed compositions determined that, in addition to sharing their understanding of learned material, these participants were involved in similar processes that teachers deem as essential in the process of writing, such as drawing on personal experience, interpretation and analyzing. Smagorinski shared, "multiple intelligences activities like

writing to learn opportunities, small groups, portfolios, and other pedagogical methods...may provide excellent learning opportunities when used thoughtfully" (Smagorinski, 1995). Finally, Smagorinski provided an illustration in which students involved in activity oriented projects eagerly applied their skills. Students in a home economics class were carefully designing and creating clothing they would wear. Smagorinski observed these pupils painstakingly measuring, making size adjustments, and stitching and restitching cloth pieces perfecting their garments; he observed these same individuals resist an English teacher's efforts encouraging them to make rough draft revisions and to include bibliography additions. (Smagorinski, 1996). Smagorinski has regularly incorporated his students in nontraditional projects because he realized students require diverse learning opportunities.

Ellen Weber, professor of education at Liberal Arts College in New York, was involved in a comprehensive academic program that builds on student interests and strengths. This multifaceted program involving students, teachers, and parents was inspired by Gardner's multiple intelligences research. Weber shared that recognizing the intelligences of students "opens doors of imagination, emotion, intellect, and spirit through which deeper learning can emerge" (Weber, 1996). She felt that an educational program of this nature allows educators to recognize the unique talents, abilities, and interests of students (Weber, 1996).

Donna Davenport and Cheryl Forbes in "Writing

movement/dancing words: a collaborative pedagogy"(1997) explained that attention must be given to the variety of ways in which people learn. The efforts of Howard Gardner and other researchers in psychology and education must be utilized in the teaching process. Davenport and Forbes shared the similarities between dancing and writing expressing "learning to dance is like learning to write: the two processes share the same mental, even physical space. I thought about cohesion, transitions, shape, syntax, word choice, focus, theme, introductions, development of ideas, detail and specificity, intention, audience..." They spoke of the eagerness to write about dance in effort to improve their ability to dance. This eagerness to write often occurred while they were involved with the applications of dance while on the dance floor.

James Gray and Julie Viens discussed the implications for curriculum design and instruction in "The Theory of Multiple Intelligences" (1994). They stated multiple intelligences applications can assist children to utilize their "cognitive strengths and interests...to engage weaker areas." They referred to this strategy as "bridging" and illustrated it with this example. A concerned teacher, knowledgeable of Gardner's research, determined a way to encourage a young student to begin writing, an activity in which he had previously resisted to participate. She intended to rely on the strength of his spatial-mechanical realm, in order to, tackle his writing inhibition, a linguistic ability. The instructor asked the student to compose a

special dictionary that would be used by others in the mechanical learning center. The youngster agreed, carefully creating a useful instrument of pictures and descriptions. Soon his willingness and confidence to write increased; he wrote about items important to him, such as family activities and social events. He eagerly shared these stories with his teacher (Gray & Viens, 1994).

School improvement projects throughout the United States and Britain influenced by Gardner's theory have encouraged students who thought themselves as unintelligent to believe otherwise. By recognizing multiple intelligences instead of solely one, students are able to determine that they are intelligent. Magnate School principal, Katherine Hynes, expressed that students develop "a sense not of how smart they are, but of how they are smart." (Hildebrand, Nash, Gray, 1995).

Learning Styles

Attention to student learning styles is an important consideration for teachers in today's classrooms. Learning style has been defined as "the way in which each person begins to concentrate on, process, and retain new and difficult information" (Dunn and Griggs, 1995, p.14). Students process information visually, auditorily, tactually, and kinesthetically.

Visual learners utilize their eyes to receive information. These learners tend to be watchful, observant,

and attentive. Lessons that allow students to read and observe a variety of learning materials, such as books, newspapers, magazines, illustrations, charts, and maps complement this style. Less than 40% of elementary age youngsters are visual learners though this percentage increases as children grow older (p.10).

Auditory learners benefit from information that can be heard. Teachers may provide information through lecture, class discussions, videos, broadcasts and taped materials. 10% - 12% of school-age youngsters learn best this way (Dunn and Griggs, 1995)

Tactual learners utilize their sense of touch to receive information. These students may use their hands, feet, or body to familiarize themselves with what is to be learned. Instructors may allow this student to grasp, feel, and/or touch a variety of items related to a studied topic.

Kinesthetic learners acquire information through experience. These pupils learn best by participating in activity oriented projects such as simulations, reenactments, field trips, and role playing. "The majority of adolescents across cultures appear to be preferentially kinesthetic and tactual" (Dunn and Griggs, 1995, p.67). Kinesthetic activities and lessons should be included in the classroom as often as possible (p.24) In addition, tactual and/or kinesthetic experiences often benefit learning disabled students (p.130) and those who tend not to perform well in school (p.113).

Research has shown that, when learning disabled students

are instructed with teaching techniques which address their preferred learning styles, achievement is significantly improved (Dunn & Griggs, 1995, p.3; Claxton & Murrell, 1987, p.72). Awareness of learning style research improves teacher awareness of individual student differences, provides an instructor with invaluable information when preparing lessons, and introduces students with new ways of thinking and behaving. Also, utilizing learning style research in the classroom can increase student consciousness of their learning styles (Claxton and Murrell, 1987, p.72).

Multisensory lessons, which include visual, auditory, tactual, and kinesthetic components, have been shown to be beneficial for students who have otherwise been unsuccessful in the classroom. Lessons of this design completely involve students in enjoyable multisensory, hands-on experiences. The amount of time students are willing to focus on their lessons is increased, communication between classmates is enhanced, and comprehension and understanding of learned material is improved. (Dunn and Griggs, 1995, p.228) Students studying nouns might visually locate nouns in a paragraph, listen to nouns accentuated on a tape, paint nouns using multicolors and sponge letters, and act out a variety of nouns. Activities of this nature allow teachers and students with increased opportunities for academic success.

Students who appear disinterested in school and/or demonstrate minimal gains in achievement may benefit from instruction geared toward their learning style preferences. These students are often those who decide to drop out of

school and/or apply minimal effort to their education; this might be prevented if attention to learning styles is considered (Dunn and Griggs, 1995).

Dunn and Griggs provided an interesting illustration regarding the relationship between the way someone learns and being gifted. Students encountering instruction geared toward personal strengths and abilities acquire a sense of accomplishment which then results in the learner feeling positive about themselves. This cause and effect experience then provides the learner with further incentive to engage in activities in which they excel. In time this individual develops into what society considers being gifted (Dunn and Griggs, 1995, p.7) Using this logic, it may be determined that attention to individual learning styles when developing educational experiences might allow many more students to experience success in school.

CHAPTER 3: BASIC COMPOSITION CURRICULUM

Project: Puppet Making/Dialogue

Intelligences: Linguistic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, bodily-kinesthetic

Objectives: Students will: create a hand puppet representing themselves; participate in experiential pre-writing; write ten simple sentences; edit for capitalization, spelling, and punctuation; introduce puppet to class.

Motivation: Introduce a puppet representing yourself to your students. Share your likes, dislikes, interests, "favorites" (e.g. books, foods, etc.), hobbies, strengths, and a couple weaknesses. Explain to students that they will be creating a puppet representing themselves. They will be introducing themselves to the class through the puppet.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, overhead projector, board, board markers, pencils, lunch size paper sacks, scissors, construction paper/scraps, glue

Procedure:

△ Monitor puppet making students as they transform paper lunch sacks into puppets resembling themselves.

△ Next, have students brainstorm information about themselves

including these areas: likes, dislikes, interests, favorites, hobbies, strengths, and weaknesses.

Δ Students will write ten simple sentences from their brainstorming about themselves.

Δ Guide students in editing their sentences for sense, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Δ Direct students to neatly rewrite their edited work.

Δ Students will use their puppets to present to the class their ten statements.

Δ Display puppets and statements for class viewing.

Project: "ME" Collage/Paragraph

Intelligences: Interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic

Objectives: Students will: create a "ME" collage of their strengths, likes, "favorites", hobbies, and talents using magazine pictures; gather information based on experience and observation; compose a ten sentence paragraph including at least five compound sentences; combine simple sentences into compound sentences; edit for sense, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Motivation: Play Bob Segar's "Like A Rock;" ask students, "what message is the singer is trying to convey?" Ask students to think about their lives. What memories have the

most impact? What likes, strengths, qualities do they have? Next, share the sample collage. Ask students what can be determined about the person who created this collage; record responses on board/butcher paper in appropriate columns (i.e. strengths, likes, etc.). Encourage students share their strengths, likes, hobbies, "favorites" (music, foods, etc.), talents. This may take place as a class or in small groups. Record replies on a piece of butcher paper in appropriate columns.

Materials: self-made collage sample, 9x12 white construction paper, magazines, glue sticks, scissors, butcher paper, markers, lined paper, headings for each "ME" topic on board, board, board markers, music: Bob Segar's, "Like A Rock," Elton John's, "Your Song" and "Levon," CD player

Procedure:

△ Lead students in a brainstorming exercise in which they will list items for these areas: strengths, likes, favorites, hobbies, talents (encourage students to include sections for each area on their paper).

△ Following this exercise guide students in searching through magazines for pictures which reflect their brainstorming; direct them to collect all pictures prior to gluing.

△ Students will arrange pictures in a collage fashion on their paper prior to gluing; encourage gluing similar to this arrangement.

△ Next, students will compose ten sentences, including at

least five compound sentences, using their brainstorming and collage as a guide.

Δ Demonstrate to the class how they can combine simple sentences into compound sentences.

Δ Students may combine their sentences and edit their work for sense, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Δ Show the advantages of getting feedback by having students read written work to classmates eliciting feedback.

Δ Finally, students may make corrections; rewrite.

Extension: Utilize the guidelines as presented above. This lesson allows students to practice simple paragraph construction utilizing pre-writing exercises based on experiencing and observation. Implement a portion of this lesson weekly until finished. Instruct students to write a topic sentence for each part of the outline. When students have completed each component they will have an autobiography. Areas of focus include schooling (preschool, kindergarten through fifth grade, middle school), family, friends, dreams/aspirations. Follow procedure presented above using these areas for each lesson. Each Roman numeral in the outline below represents a paragraph.

Outline: I. Introduction - general self description
II. Education III. Family IV. Friendships V. Dreams & aspirations VI. Conclusion - summary/anecdotal story

Project: Life Rules List/Simple and Compound Sentences

Intelligences: Intrapersonal, interpersonal, linguistic

Objectives: Students will: gather information through speaking and listening to classmates; evaluate gathered information; compose simple and compound sentences to include a variety of sentences; edit for sense, spelling, punctuation and capitalization.

Motivation: Ask students if they have ever heard of James A. Garfield. Explain to them who he was and that he was given "Rules for Living" from an admired friend. Place transparency on overhead so that students may follow. Then, encourage students to share why such a list might be useful? Ask individuals for additions and/or deletions to the list encouraging a discussion.

Materials: transparency of "Rules for Living" (see Appendix A), overhead projector, board, board markers, lined paper, pencils

Procedures:

Δ Continue to encourage student interaction to decide on "Rules for Living;" determine several sample "rules."

Δ Direct students in developing "Rules for Living" useful to their lives. Tell them to compose fifteen "rules" then choose their best ten. Expect them to share their original fifteen

then share why they chose their final ten.

Δ Students will edit their final ten for sense, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Rewrite.

Δ Ask for volunteers to share their final "rules."

Project: Mission Viejo and Around Brochure/Paragraphs

Intelligences: Intrapersonal, interpersonal, bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic

Objectives: Students will: gather information through speaking, listening and interviewing; take notes; prepare a brochure with pictures and text persuading young people; edit their work for sense, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Motivation: Share list of things to do in Puerto Vallarta per advertisement (display overhead transparency). Ask students if they have ever done any of these things. Direct pairs of students to interview each other regarding things they like to do in the Mission Viejo area; they will record interviewee's responses. Have pairs share their lists. Let students know that Mission Viejo is looking for someone to design a brochure attracting young visitors to the area.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, transparency of travel advertisement from newspaper or travel agency (I use a Puerto

Vallarta advertisement), overhead projector, board, board markers, scratch/construction paper (8x11 1/2 folded length-wise), magazines, scissors, glue sticks

Procedure:

Δ Have students brainstorm activities for adolescents to do within a ten mile radius of their school. Direct each student to record responses on paper.

Δ Let students know that each of them is going to create a brochure of things to do in the Mission Viejo area.

Δ Encourage students to find magazine pictures representing activities to see and visit in the area.

Δ Next, students will prepare the text portions of the brochure. First, they will write a list of 12-15 "items" to see/visit. Second, they will write fifty words enticing adolescents to visit the area.

Δ Students are to share the text with the group; edit.

Δ Prepare brochure using construction paper.

Δ Encourage students to share final brochures.

Extension: Students may write a business letter to the Tourism Board of Mission Viejo informing them that they have created a brochure for young people they would like the city to consider implementing.

Project: Pumpkin Patch Painting/Essay

Intelligences: Linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal

Objectives: Student will: use experiential and observation pre-writing activities; use compound and complex sentences to compose paragraphs; compose a multi-paragraph composition; compose at least one topic sentence with four supporting sentences; create a pictorial of pumpkin patch; share; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Cluster "Pumpkin Patch" on the board. Encourage students to think about location, how pumpkins are presented, surrounding environment, weather conditions, individuals present, time of day, etc.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, board, board markers, 9x12 blank white, watercolors, brushes, water/containers, newspaper for coverage, crayons, pumpkins placed about room for touching & carving, pumpkin cut outs posted near board

Procedure:

Δ Motivate students to brainstorm "Pumpkin Patch" while you record responses on the board.

Δ Provide students with 9x12 blank white paper so that they can sketch a pumpkin patch based on brainstormed ideas. Final sketch is to be drawn in crayon. A watercolor wash will be painted over patch to represent weather. The crayon will

resist the paint.

△ Students will compose the initial paragraph sharing their general thoughts about Halloween. Remind them that they will be writing a rough draft, revising and recopying.

△ Refer students to their pumpkin patch drawings directing them to write a paragraph about their patch.

△ Next, brainstorm how pumpkins appear. Encourage students to choose pumpkins to touch aiding their brainstorming. Direct students to use their five senses to make observations.

Record responses on the board.

△ Encourage students to review the brainstorming in order to determine possible topic sentences for the second paragraph about how pumpkins appear; record possibilities on the board. Students may begin a paragraph on the appearances of pumpkins in the patch. Have students tell about choosing a pumpkin.

△ The final paragraph of this essay concerns Halloween night.

△ Edit rough draft.

△ Direct students to share their compositions obtaining feedback; reedit; rewrite.

△ Mount pumpkin patch on black paper and post; place stories in plastic and encase in three-ringed binder for class reading.

Outline: I. Introduction - Thoughts about Halloween
II. Pumpkin patch description III. Picking the pumpkin
IV. Halloween Night

Project: Pumpkin Carving/Exposition - Process

Intelligences: Linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic

Objectives: Student will: use experiential pre-writing experience; write compound and complex sentences; compose a topic sentence; develop an expository composition about a process; share; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Ask students if they have ever carved a pumpkin. Who participated with them? How did they decide on how to carve it? Tell the students that they are going to take part in a pumpkin carving activity.

Materials: pumpkins (students can each bring a small pumpkin, or collect money and purchase one per two students), knife for cutting pumpkin top, large metal spoons, lined paper, pencils, overhead projector, board, board markers, scratch paper, newspaper for coverage, crayons/markers, Halloween music, player on which to play music

Procedure:

Δ Ask for volunteers to cover carving work area with newspaper.

Δ Discuss the steps involved in pumpkin carving; record these on the board.

Δ Arrange students with their pumpkin to be carved.

Δ Direct students to practice their potential face on scratch

paper with pencil.

Δ Interact with ready individuals to carefully cut and remove top of pumpkin; student can remove seeds.

Δ Student can begin drawing face to be carved.

Δ Student can carefully carve face with adult supervision.

Δ Discuss with students the steps they used when carving their pumpkin.

Δ Explain that they are going to begin a rough draft page about the steps involved in carving a pumpkin; steps from board can be used although students are to add their input from their actual experience. Review compound and complex sentence structure.

Δ Share descriptive paragraphs obtaining feedback.

Δ Edit; rewrite.

Extension: Creative stories about Halloween from the view point of the Jack-O-Lantern are exciting for students to compose. Objectives for this lesson include those above though this paragraph is an imaginary story. Students can view Jack-O-Lanterns while creating their stories.

Project: Thoreau/Simple Sentences

Intelligences: Linguistic, intrapersonal, interpersonal

Objectives: Students will: use pre-writing experiences based on speaking and listening; evaluate gathered information;

compose simple sentences; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Refer to the posted quote: "In some way everybody is our teacher" - Henry Thoreau. Ask students if they believe this to be true. Why or Why not?

Materials: lined paper, pencils, board, board markers, butcher paper, posted quote: "In some way everybody is our teacher" - Henry Thoreau

Procedure:

△ Continue discussing Thoreau's quote. Encourage students to consider things they learn from different individuals, family members, friends, acquaintances. Likewise, encourage students to think about what they teach others. Share with them some things they have taught you.

△ Brainstorm individual strengths, interests, talents, and abilities of students; record on butcher paper as students will refer to this throughout this lesson.

△ Students will be composing several pairs of simple sentences utilizing the following format:

I can teach classmate's name to item to be taught.

I can learn item to be learned from classmate's name.

△ Students will complete a pair of sentences for each classmate in the class.

△ Edit; rewrite.

△ Place completed papers in notebook for class viewing.

Project: Paper Mache Mask/Story

Intelligences: Linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal

Objectives: Students will: use experiential pre-writing; compose a descriptive paragraph; create a simple outline; create a narrative; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Encourage students to think of a fictional character they admire. Why do they like this character? What positive qualities does this character have? Any negative qualities? Record responses on the board. Ask students to think about a character they might create.

Materials: 9" round balloons, newspaper strips (1" x 5"), newspaper for coverage, starch, twine, paper clips, pencils, lined paper, low flat containers for starch, construction paper scraps, board, board markers, masking tape

Procedure:

A Direct students to blow up a balloon, attach a piece of string to the balloon and a paper clip to the other end of the string. Also, write your name on a piece of masking tape and attach to string near paper clip. (Have this done in advance.)

A Illustrate how to begin covering the balloon with starch covered newspaper strips. Dip newspaper strips into starch, remove excess, and apply. Cover with two layers; hang by

paper clip. Allow to dry overnight.

Δ Allow the application of an additional layer or two of paper mache. Allow to dry overnight. Cut in half; save extra half for future use.

Δ Supply students with ample art supplies to decorate their masks.

Δ Assist students in composing introductory paragraph describing the appearance of their mask.

Δ Next, encourage students to think about an exciting experience in which their character was involved. Assist them in creating an outline sequencing several parts of this experience. Illustrate to the students how to transform their outline into a story.

Δ Direct students to share compositions obtaining comments and suggestions from peers.

Δ Edit; rewrite.

Δ Post masks; place stories in notebook for class viewing.

Project: Art Expression - Impressionism/Journaling - News Story

Intelligences: Naturalist, bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic, intrapersonal

Objectives: students will: create Impressionism art; use observation and experiential pre-writing; create journal entries summarizing experience; compose news story using

impressionism facts and pre-writing; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Explain to students that a new painting style is influencing the painting world. It involves attending to the impressions of light. Dabs of pure, bright colors are used to paint pictures of nature. Ask students if any are familiar with this new method. Let them know that you have been reading about it and are quite knowledgeable and will instruct them as to how it is done.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, art journals, transparency of Impressionism facts (see appendix A), overhead projector, board, board markers, tempera (multicolors), medium brushes, newspaper for coverage, water/containers, canvasses (old manilla folders cut 8X11), examples of Impressionism (books/pictures), pictures of nature (Audubon calendar, books)

Procedure:

Δ Review Impressionism facts, paying attention to unfamiliar vocabulary.

Δ Display samples of Impressionism art explaining to students that many painters from around the world were influenced by this technique.

Δ Direct students to make a dated entry in their journals about their feelings/opinions of this painting style.

Students may include thoughts, feelings, attitudes, questions, etc. Four or five sentences will be sufficient.

Δ Allow students to paint their art pieces observing nature out of a window or from pictures of nature. Remind them to use dabs of bright color to create their art forms. Students may sign and date their art.

Δ Following the completion of art projects, students will make a second entry summarizing their artistic experience.

Δ Next, students will write a news story (rough draft) about Impressionism. They are to include facts, their impressions, and/or their experiences with this new style of painting.

Δ Edit; revise; rewrite.

Δ Post art on black background, then onto classroom wall.

Project: Art Expression - Seurat/Journaling

Intelligences: Naturalist, bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic, intrapersonal

Objectives: students will: create Impressionism art of Seurat; use observation and experiential pre-writing; create journal entries summarizing experience; compose a friendly letter; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Ask for volunteers to read their journal entries from previous painting experience. Encourage students to get in "touch" with what it was like to be an Impressionist painter. Next, display some of Georges Seurat's artwork.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, art journals, transparency

of Georges Seurat facts (see appendix A), overhead projector, board, board markers, tempera (multicolors), newspaper for coverage, water/containers, canvasses (old manilla folders cut 4X5 1/2), examples of Seurat's art (books/pictures), transparency of friendly letter sample, pencils with erasers

Procedure:

Δ Review Impressionism facts; review facts of Georges Seurat, with students, paying attention to unfamiliar vocabulary.

Δ Display samples of Seurat's art explaining to students that many painters from around the world were influenced by this technique.

Δ Direct students to make an entry in their journals about their thoughts regarding this type of painting, experience so far as painters, etc. Be sure they date their entry.

Δ Allow students to paint their art pieces using pencil eraser to apply dots of color; also remind students that bright, pure colors were being used. Encourage students to sign and date their art.

Δ Following completion of art students will make another entry summing their experience.

Δ Mount their art on black paper and include in the classroom gallery.

Δ Next, students will compose a friendly letter sharing their latest interest, i.e., impressionist painting. (direct them to include at least two facts about Impressionism and information regarding their experiences with the Seurat and Impressionistic style).

A Edit; revise; rewrite.

Project: Art Expression - Van Gogh/Journaling

Intelligences: Naturalist, bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic, intrapersonal

Objectives: Students will: create Van Gogh influenced art; use observation and experiential pre-writing; create journal entries summarizing experience; compose a paragraph discussing their opinion of painting including three reasons; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Ask for volunteers to read their journal entries from one of the initial Impressionist painting experiences. Remind students that painting and journaling are not uncommon exercises. These activities continue even today in all sorts of careers. Tell students that they will be painting as did another influenced by the Impressionist painters - Vincent Van Gogh. Encourage students to share what they know about this artist.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, art journals, transparency of Vincent Van Gogh facts (see appendix A), overhead projector, board, board markers, tempera (multicolors) newspaper for coverage, water/containers, canvasses (old manilla folders cut 8X11), medium brushes, examples of Van

Gogh's art (books/pictures)

Procedure:

Δ Review Impressionism facts; review facts of Van Gogh with students, paying attention to unfamiliar vocabulary.

Δ Display samples of Van Gogh's art explaining that he was influenced by Impressionism.

Δ Direct students to make an entry in their journals regarding what it is like being a painter. They may want to include ideas about what they have painted or would like to paint. Have them date their entry.

Δ Allow students to paint their art pieces using layers of color; remind participants that Van Gogh enjoyed painting with bright colors, especially yellow. Instruct students to sign and date their art.

Δ Following completion of art, students will make another entry summing their experience.

Δ Discuss with students their opinions of painting. Is it something they enjoy doing? Do any paint outside of the classroom? Can they understand why someone might paint for enjoyment?

Δ Direct students to begin writing a paragraph about their opinions of painting. Have them begin with a topic statement that tells the reader how they feel about painting. Have them then include three reasons using one or two sentences for each reason.

Δ Mount their completed art pieces and post in gallery.

Project: Art Expression - Paul Cezanne/Journaling

Intelligences: Naturalist, bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic, intrapersonal

Objectives: Students will: create Cezanne art piece; use observation and experiential pre-writing to create journal entries.

Motivation: Ask for volunteers to read their journal entries from one of the initial Impressionist/Van Gogh painting experiences. How is the life of a painter similar to their lives? Different? Tell students that today they will be creating art that followed the Impressionist period. Today, they will learn of Paul Cezanne.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, art journals, transparency of Paul Cezanne facts (see appendix A), overhead projector, board, board markers, tissue paper (multicolors), newspaper for coverage, white glue, scissors canvasses (old manilla folders cut 8X11), brushes, examples of Van Gogh's art (books/pictures)

Procedure:

Δ Review Cezanne facts with students, paying attention to unfamiliar vocabulary.

Δ Display samples of Cezanne art.

Δ Direct students to make a dated entry in their journals

about their painting experiences thus far. Willing students can share their entries.

Δ Tell students they will use another medium to understand how Paul Cezanne created his art using overlays of color.

Δ Allow students to create their art pieces using layers of tissue paper. Students must include at least the following: sky, ground, and an object (e.g. sun, mountain, tree).

Students may sign and date their art.

Δ Following completion of art students will make another entry summarizing their experience.

Δ Mount their completed pieces on black paper and post.

Project: Musical Observation/Word Phrases Into Sentences

Intelligences: Musical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic

Objectives: Students will: gather information through listening; compose sentences from words and phrases; compose paragraphs from sentences; share; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Ask students what kind of music they enjoy; encourage them to share why they like certain types of music; what kind of thoughts and feelings does music evoke? (you might want to record these responses on the board). Play some pieces of music from popular movies (e.g. Dances With Wolves, Jurassic Park, Batman). Encourage students to share impressions; record on board. How does music add to a movie?

How does music enhance one's life/living?

Materials: lined paper, pencils, board, board markers, three samples of movie music, four samples of classical type music (Ludwig Van Beethoven: Symphony No.3, Kronos Quartet: "Black Angel" from album Black Angel, Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, any piece of big band music), player on which to play music

Procedure:

Δ Explain to class that they are going to listen to some music compositions and record their impressions using words and phrases.

Δ Play first selection and allow students to record words/phrases at desk.

Δ Play next two or three selections; encourage students to jot down their words and phrases; it might be helpful to encourage students to think of thoughts, feelings, etc. that music stirs in someone. People are often able to share experiences they have been involved with when certain types of music is played.

Δ Next, play the initial tune again for which the class as a whole created words and phrases. Working with the class, transform these into sentences. Now, direct the students to transform their words/phrases into sentences.

Δ Provide students with examples enabling them to create paragraphs with their sentences. Instruction about combining sentences may prove beneficial for the class.

- Δ Encourage volunteers to share their completed paragraphs.
- Δ Edit; revise; rewrite.
- Δ Finally, provide students with colored pencils so that they can illustrate their paragraphs.
- Δ Include paragraphs and illustrations in a notebook for class viewing.

Project: "I Have A Dream"/Essay

Intelligences: Linguistic, musical, intrapersonal

Objectives: Students will: gather information through listening and observing; compose a three paragraph letter of three quarters of a page to someone of their choice using correct letter form; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Begin by playing #9 Dream by John Lennon or Dreaming by Blondie and discuss; follow by reading "I Have a Dream" by Martin Luther King, Jr. (students may take turns reading).

Materials: lined paper, pencils, board, board markers, Blondie's "Dreaming" (The Best of Blondie) , John Lennon's "#9 Dream" and "Imagine" (Collection CD), Michael Jackson's "Earth Song" (History), Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream"

Procedure:

Δ Discuss dreams/aspirations students have for society/the world.

Δ Ask individuals to think of a dream they have for the world.

Δ Play Michael Jackson's "Earth Song."

Δ Tell students that they are going to write a letter to someone of their choice (brainstorm some possibilities) discussing their dream.

Δ Explain that the letter will include three paragraphs: I. Inform the recipient as to why you are writing them II. Share a bit about yourself III. Share your dream for society

Δ Compose rough draft; edit.

Δ Share; receive feedback; edit; rewrite.

Project: Blowing Bubbles/Essay

Intelligences: Interpersonal, bodily-kinesthetic, naturalist, linguistic

Objectives: Students will: utilize experiential and observation pre-writing; compose a multi-paragraph composition with introduction; create topic sentences plus four sentences for each paragraph; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Begin by inquiring of the class if any of them has ever blown bubbles? Encourage volunteers to share the

details of the experience.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, board, board markers, notebooks, bubble mix with container, wire bubble makers,

Procedure:

Δ Explain to students that they will be observing the appearance of bubbles blown by themselves and classmates.

Δ Guide class outside (they will need their notebooks/pencils to record their observations; bring the bubble mix/wire bubble blowers).

Δ Allow students to blow bubbles from five to ten minutes; remind them to observe the appearances of the bubbles.

Δ Gather individuals for a brainstorming session. Encourage students to think of shape, color, size, and lasting time.

Direct several to blow some bubbles while classmates observe and record; next, direct students to reverse roles.

Δ Return to the classroom.

Δ Assist in developing an essay with the following outline:

I. Introduction - Bubble blowing in general II. Description of bubbles (using observations) III. Where do bubbles go? IV.

Closing - summarize the bubble blowing highlights.

Δ Share rough draft listening to peer feedback.

Δ Finalize editing; rewrite.

Project: "If I Were An Animal"/Exposition - Comparison

Intelligences: Linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal

Objectives: Students will: construct a paper mache animal model; participate in experiential and observation pre-writing; compose an expository piece including comparisons; complete a Ven Diagram; write four topic sentences.

Motivation: Ask students what animal they would be if they could be any animal; encourage students to supply reasons for their choices. Record responses on board.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, board, board markers, scratch paper, starch, containers, newspaper strips (1" x 5" approx.), newspaper for coverage, Ven diagrams, masking tape

Procedure:

Δ Direct students to complete the left side of their Ven diagram with regard to themselves; include this information: appearance, personality, favorite foods and activities, friends, habitat, enemies.

Δ Next, have students complete the right side of the Ven diagram for their chosen animal supplying information for the categories used for themselves.

Δ Assist students to create a miniature paper mache model of their animal. Use tape and newspaper to create a skeleton. Have students cut short masking tape strips writing qualities

of their animal on the strips before using the tape to begin making animal.

Δ As students create their animal encourage them to add any newly thought of characteristics to their Ven diagram.

Δ Apply starch covered newspaper strips to skeleton to form one to two layers. Allow to dry overnight.

Δ Students can now begin their essays. Begin with the introductory paragraph, that is, "Why would you be this animal?"

Δ Encourage students to handle their paper mache animal thinking about the model and their Ven diagram; monitor them in completing a paragraph describing their animal.

Δ Guide students in adding additional paper mache layers to their models; allow to dry over night.

Δ Students can compose the final paragraphs, i.e., Similarities between animal and self, and Closing.

Δ Assist students in writing topic sentences for paragraphs.

Δ Edit; share; receiving feedback.

Δ Reedit; rewrite.

Δ Paint animal model.

Outline: I. Why I Chose this animal II. Description of Animal III. Similarities between animal and myself IV. Closing - summarize main points of essay

Extension: #1 Direct students to use encyclopedia to gather additional information about their chosen animal. Assist them in developing an outline based on interest guiding their

research. Additional objectives included as a result of this extension: using an encyclopedia to gather information, taking notes and creating an outline. #2 Tell students that they are going to write a paragraph or two comparing themselves to their animal. They will utilize their Ven diagram to share the similarities and the differences.

Project: Pizza/Essay - Description

Intelligences: Linguistic, intrapersonal, bodily-kinesthetic

Objectives: Students will: construct a "pizza" using construction paper; participate in experiential and observing information gathering; compose a multi-paragraph essay; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Ask students what their favorite food is (it has been my experience that pizza is the overwhelming favorite); brainstorm favorite pizza toppings and pizza parlors recording them on the board.

Materials: paper pizza samples, precut pizza rounds (12" dia.), construction paper scraps, scissors, glue, black construction for mounting, plastic covers for final drafts, board, board markers

Procedure:

- Δ Demonstrate proper paper pizza preparation to students.
- Δ Explain the paragraphs in this "pizza paper:" I. Describe favorite pizza (use model) II. Favorite pizza parlor III. "If I could eat pizza anywhere in the world" IV. A pizza experience/story
- Δ Monitor student's pizza paper composing.
- Δ Ask for volunteers to share papers.
- Δ Direct students in editing; rewrite.
- Δ Place final into plastic cover into notebook.
- Δ Mount student pizzas on black paper onto wall.

Outline: I. Describe favorite pizza (using model)
II. Favorite pizza place III. If I could eat pizza anywhere in world IV. Pizza experience/story

Extension: Assist the class in determining all the steps in making a real pizza; record steps on board. Direct students in creating an expository composition telling how to make a pizza from start to finish. Additional objectives for this lesson would include creating an exposition paper explaining a process.

Project: Potato Print Paper/Exposition - Process

Intelligences: Bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic

Objectives: Students will: participate in experiential information gathering; create a potato print art piece; compose an exposition paper about a process; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Tell students they are to create a potato print design. Encourage them to begin thinking of a shape or figure for their design which they will reproduce to create a work of art. Share previous samples.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, board, board markers, clean potatoes (one for each), knife, scissors/plastic knives for carving/creating, newspaper for coverage, water colors, brushes, water/containers, scratch paper, blank white, sequence of steps on board, examples of potato print designs

Procedure:

△ Supervise student cutting of potato.

△ Monitor student design creation. They will use plastic knife or small scissors to make design.

△ Students with completed potato print will choose a watercolor with which to apply to print; practice design in different patterns on scratch paper.

△ Apply final design to blank white in decided pattern; title, sign, and date print design.

△ Explain to the class that they are going to write a page explaining how they created their fascinating art piece. Tell students that they may refer to the list of steps on the board adding personal detail.

Δ Watch as students edit their paragraph; ask pupils to share; no rewriting of this paper.

Δ Display art about classroom.

Project: Totem Pole/Research Paper

Intelligences: Bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic, intrapersonal

Objectives: Students will: create a totem; participate in observation information gathering; research five facts from encyclopedia; compose four paragraph essay; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Ask students for suggestions of individuals who have made the world a better place. Record responses on the board. Encourage reasons for their choices. Explain to students that they will be creating part of a totem pole. They will choose an individual who they feel has been an important contributor to society.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, board, board markers, totem pole facts (overhead or poster), totem pole books, photographs and pictures, empty coffee containers, construction paper/scraps, scissors, glue, sample of totem piece, scratch paper, markers, crayons, colored pencils, resource books

Procedure:

- Δ Review totem information.
- Δ Provide students with materials to create their individual totem piece.
- Δ Supervise students in composing the initial paragraph (of their four paragraph essay) about why they chose their particular person. (remaining paragraphs: II. Contributions to society III. How I can continue this person's influence IV. Closing - thoughts concerning how people affect society positively.
- Δ Assist students in researching five significant contributions their chosen person has made to society.
- Δ Monitor student writing of compositions.
- Δ Direct students to share their edited drafts prior to rewriting.
- Δ Inquire for student assistance to construct totem pole; place in good location.
- Δ Attach student compositions adjacent to totem piece.

Project: Spring Observation/Paragraph Development

Intelligences: Naturalist, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic

Objectives: Students will: participate in observation information gathering; take notes based on observation; select topic for essay; prepare outline; compose paragraphs; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Take students outside on a spring-like day. Ask them to sit quietly for a few minutes. Have them use their senses to observe. Encourage the recording of the signs of spring beginning with what they see, hear, smell, touch, and taste.

Materials: A predetermined location for students to observe "Signs of Spring," lined paper, pencils, notebooks

Procedure:

Δ Prior to taking students outside for their spring observations, discuss the five senses.

Δ Assist students in preparing their information gathering sheets. Fold a piece of lined paper into thirds lengthwise; print sight, hearing, and smell above each column on the front; print feeling and taste above the first two columns on the reverse.

Δ Guide students to the spring location.

Δ Encourage students to sit quietly for several minutes before asking them to record their observations. Ask that they attempt to list from six to ten items below each of the five headings.

Δ Refer to previous essays in which they followed a teacher-made outline. Tell students that they will participate in making an outline for this paper.

Δ Explain that it will have four paragraphs with an introduction and a closing. The second and third paragraphs must relate to their observations but the topics can be

determined by them, as individuals. Discuss possibilities.

Δ Supervise students as they compose their rough drafts.

Δ Direct students to share their completed essays; edit; rewrite.

Outline: I. Introduction - General feelings about Spring

II. Sense (students choose one of the five senses)

III. Sense (students choose a second sense)

IV. Closing - thoughts of experience

Project: Internet Report/Research Paper

Intelligences: Bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic, interpersonal

Objectives: Students will: collect information using the internet; choose a research topic; determine a simple outline; takes notes; compose a multi-paragraph research paper; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Ask students what they would like to learn if they could choose anything; record responses on board. Encourage students to share reasons for their choices.

Materials: reserve Internet time, lined paper, pencils, board, board markers

Procedure:

Δ Discuss the basics of library etiquette and internet use prior to departing from classroom.

Δ Review some student examples of previously written papers and outlines. Explain to students that they will be able to research just about anything.

Δ Develop outlines with individual students based on student chosen topics. Have students write a brief paragraph sharing why they want to research their topic.

Δ Supervise students to library; assist them in collecting information based on their outlines.

Δ Help students create paragraphs using their researched information.

Δ Remind students to edit their research papers; share; obtain feedback.

Δ Reedit; rewrite.

Project: Old Black Fly/A Book

Intelligences: Linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, naturalist

Objectives: Students will: create complex sentences; create a story; use listening and experience for gathering information; create text and illustrations for a book; edit; revise; rewrite.

Motivation: Read Old Black Fly by Jim Aylesworth. Tell

students that they will be choosing a mischievous insect and creating a series of complex sentences and illustrations to make a book. Allow students to review some samples of previously student made books. (Encourage students to observe mischievous insects in action).

Materials: lined paper, pencils, board, board markers, Old Black Fly by Jim Aylesworth illustrations by Stephen Gammell) Henry Holt and Company, Inc. 1992, ISBN 0-8050-3924-2), rulers, art supplies for illustrations, blank white 6x9, previous student samples, basic steps written on board (make placards for each step working with students until they feel comfortable)

Procedure:

Δ Students will construct 26 sentences; each will have a noun beginning with a different letter of the alphabet, an adjective, a verb, and a prepositional phrase. Brainstorming insects, verbs, adjectives proves helpful. A list of prepositions can assist students in creating prepositional phrases (the noun in the prepositional phrase is in addition to the noun for each alphabet letter).

Δ Engage the class in creating some examples; record them on the board.

Δ Direct student to choose a mischievous insect

Δ Discuss the basic steps:

Δ begin each sentence with either "he" or "she" and using same pronoun for each.

- Δ choose a verb you have not used.
- Δ create a sentence with this verb.
- Δ add an adjective.
- Δ add a prepositional phrase.
- Δ be sure that your first sentence includes a noun which begins with an "a." Your second sentence will include a noun that begins with a "b," third sentence with a "c" and so on.
- Δ Assist students to complete 26 sentences in this fashion.
- Δ Students may include a quick sketch of illustration ideas.
- Δ Have students edit sentences according to criteria.
- Δ Direct students in using a ruler to draw straight lines on the 6x9 blank white; both sides will be used.
- Δ Students carefully transcribe sentences to constructed lines, checking for spelling, punctuation, capitalization.
- Δ Illustrations can now be drawn and colored.
- Δ Have students create a short introduction that will begin their story; also they may want a title page with their title, name, city, and date.
- Δ Attach pages.

CHAPTER 4: BACK MATTER

Conclusion

Pragmatist John Dewey believed that students learn best by doing. I, as a result of my experiences interacting with special needs students, agree with Dewey that these youngsters are learning and comprehending best when they are engaged in learning. It is as if they do not realize they are involved in the educational experience.

The research of Howard Gardner has given credence to the utilization of varied activities in the classroom and has supplied useful information to further the educational aspirations of educators. All students are able to realize their inherent strengths, abilities and potential in the classroom. Writing lessons that instruct while providing pupils with opportunities to become engrossed in their education is extremely beneficial for everyone involved in educating adolescents.

Program Evaluation

Implementation and evaluation of this writing curriculum is an ongoing process. As a result of diverse student ability levels in the special day classroom close monitoring is required to ensure individuals are progressing adequately as

specified in the Individual Education Plan. Behavioral goals are written by the IEP team for each student providing a course of action; learning outcomes are determined for each goal specifying criteria and dates for completion. Criteria includes methods for evaluation (e.g. portfolio, standardized test, informal testing, pre- and post- test). Instructors carefully review each students IEP goals attending closely to the objectives for written language.

Though, this writing curriculum is designed for implementation at a variety of student achievement levels, caution must be taken to ensure that all individuals are adequately instructed. Consideration of specific pupil requirements such as furnishing sufficient time, clear expectations, carefully worded directions and direct instruction, may be necessary to achieve the objectives of each lesson. Some students may complete objectives more rapidly while other youngsters may require individual assistance to satisfy the lesson criteria. These variations in student abilities must be carefully attended to throughout each lesson during the academic year.

APPENDIX A
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Impressionism

- * Impressionism began in France during the late 19th century.
- * The chief concern of Impressionism was capturing the “impressions” of light.
- * The artists took their easels outside and painted what they saw.
- * Impressionists used purer, lighter colors.
- * Nature and contemporary life were frequently painted.
- * Impressionists included: Monet, Renoir, Pissaro, Sisley, and Cassatt.

Georges Seurat

- * Georges Seurat was influenced by Impressionism.
- * Seurat used purer, lighter colors and paid attention to the impressions of light.
- * Seurat developed a technique in which paint was applied in isolated dots - pointillism.
- * He enjoyed painting nature and contemporary life.

Vincent Van Gogh

- * Vincent Van Gogh was inspired by the Impressionists.
- * Van Gogh painted with thick layers of color called impasto.
- * He enjoyed painting with bright colors, especially yellow.
- * Van Gogh had trouble with his self image; this is often reflected in his art.
- * Van Gogh's technique of using swirling lines may reflect the torment in his mind.

Paul Cezanne

- * Paul Cezanne was a post-Impressionist artist.
- * Post Impressionism began during the mid 1880's.
- * Post Impressionism is a term describing the period following Impressionism.
- * Paul Cezanne used a schematic** overlay*** of colors.
- * Cezanne enjoyed painting still lifes, figures, and landscapes.
- * Post Impressionists also included Van Gogh and Gauguin.
- ** without details
- *** layer of material

LIFE RULES

- Never be idle.
- Make few promises.
- Always speak the truth.
- Live within your means.
- Never speak evil of anyone.
- Keep good company or none.
- Live up to your engagements.
- Never play games of chance.
- Drink no intoxicating drinks.
- Good character is above everything else.
- Keep your own secrets if you have any.
- Never borrow if you can possibly help it.
- Do not marry until you are able to support a wife.
- When you speak to a person, look into his eyes.
- Save when you are young to spend when you are old.
- Never run into debt unless you can see a way out again.
- Good company and good conversation are the sinews of virtue.
- Your character cannot be essentially injured except by your own acts.
- If anybody speaks evil of you, let your life be so that no one believes him.
- When you retire at night, think over what you have done during the day.
- If your hands cannot be employed usefully, attend to the culture of your mind.
- Read the above carefully and thoughtfully at least once a week.

REFERENCES

- Armstrong, T. (1995). The myth of the A.D.D. child. New York: Penguin Group.
- Claxton, C. S., & Murrell, P. H. (1987). Learning styles: Implications for improving educational practices. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 4. Washington, D.C.: Association for the Study of Higher Education.
- Davenport, D. R. & Forbes, C. A. (1997, December 12). Writing movement/dancing words: A collaborative pedagogy. Education. (Electric Library)
- Dunn, R. & Griggs, S. A. (1995). Multiculturalism and learning style: Teaching and counseling adolescents. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers.
- Gardner, H. (1993). Multiple intelligences: The theory in practice. New York: BasicBooks.
- Gardner, H. (1998, March 19). An intelligent way to process. Independent, pp. E4, E5. (Electric Library)
- Gray, J. H. and Viens, J. T. (1994, January 1). The theory of multiple intelligences. National Forum. (Electric Library)
- Hildebrand, J., Nash, C., & Gray, K. (1995, October 2). Short takes. Newsday. (Electric Library).
- Ozman, H. & Craver, S. (1992). Philosophical foundations of education (5th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Rooney, K. (1995). Dyslexia revisited: history, educational philosophy, and clinical assessment applications. Intervention in School and Clinic, 31, 1-11. (Electric Library)
- Smagorinski, P. (1995). Multiple intelligences in English class: An overview. English Journal, 84(8), 80-86.
- Smagorinski, P. (1996). Multiple intelligences, multiple means of composing: An alternative way of thinking about learning. NASSP Bulletin, 80(583) November, 8-17.
- Weber, E. (1996). Creating communities in high school: An interactive learning and teaching approach. NASSP Bulletin, 80(583), 76-86.

White, J. (1998, February 19). Education: intelligence guru on a sticky wicket. Independent, pp. E4. (Electric Library)